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Gang Violence Uptick

PPB says gang violence is up, but overall violence is not

By Donovan M. Smith
 Of The Skanner News

According to the Portland Police Bureau, the number of violent crimes tied to gang activity is at an all-time high since the bureau started keeping records in 1999 — and the year's not even over.

Already, the police have recorded more than 150 incidents they say are gang-related. Portland Police spokesperson Sgt. Pete Simpson told *The Skanner* “gang-related” doesn't have a universal definition. Instead, police use a working description of gang membership. Simpson said every city that documents gang activity still has “gray areas.”

At the beginning of this month, PPB sent out a press release to media outlets across the metro area saying they have investigated more than 600 violent crimes related to gang activity in the last five years. The city defines “violent crime” using four categories: robbery, aggravated assault, forcible rape and murder (including non-negligent manslaughter). Nonetheless, Simpson said, the numbers help add some perspective to the city's current situation.

“This exceeds all previous years in which this type of record has been kept by the Portland Police Bureau, and there are still four months to go in the year,” Simpson said. “While it is not possible to accurately compare 2015 to the mid-1990s, when gang violence was rampant in the city of Portland, we know that this year, communities are experiencing gunfire on a regular basis.”

After a 16-year-old boy was arrested in connection with a shooting at Alberta's Last Thursday street festival in May, injuring three people, Chief Larry O'Dea assigned six additional officers to the Gang Enforcement Team.

Turon Lamont Walker Jr., who confessed to and apologized for the shooting at his first court appearance, faces charges of attempt-

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PITCHING IN



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Garfield High School teacher Jesse Hagopian and his son Miles help pass out food at Northwest Harvest in Seattle Sept. 11. Thousands of striking teachers did community service on the anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Leaders of the Seattle teachers' union voted Tuesday night to approve a tentative agreement with the school district and end the strike. At press time schools were scheduled to reopen Thursday morning.

Renters in State of Emergency

Following press conference, Saltzman announces tenant protections

By Arashi Young
 Of The Skanner News

Tensions are running high for tenants in Portland's rental market.

Rising rents and building-wide evictions dump droves of renters on the street looking for new housing. Apartments listed on Craigslist — often at prices out of reach for average renters — are snatched up within hours of posting. Rising vitriol on online forums condemns a housing market posters call predatory.

Wednesday morning, Dan Saltzman announced short-term measures to protect renters in a rapidly changing market. Landlords are now required to give 90 days notice for no-cause lease terminations, and must give the same amount of notice if they intend to raise the rent by more than 10 percent. Mayor Charlie Hales has gone on record as supporting the new protections.

The proposed changes come on the heels of a Tuesday night press conference at which the Community Alliance of Tenants

declared a renter state of emergency, and a Tuesday morning stakeholder meeting on the future of affordable housing in Northeast Portland.

Justin Buri, executive director of CAT, said people in Portland are being displaced at an alarming rate.

“Too many tenants over the summer are being pushed out from unreasonable rent hikes, drastic rent hikes, rent hikes that force them out of their homes and into one of the worst rental markets in Portland history —

and they only have 30 days (to move),” Buri said.

He also said that CAT's renter's rights hotline is getting an unprecedented number of calls regarding rent hikes and no-cause evictions. The health and social services hotline 211info has seen an 8 percent increase in housing-related needs requests over the last year.

According to a recent study of rent prices nationwide, the Portland area has the fourth fastest-growing rent, increasing

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Black Winemaker Boosts Representation

Bertony Faustin aims to show the changing face of U.S. vineyards

By Donovan M. Smith
 Of The Skanner News

It wasn't until the death of his father in 2007, Bertony Faustin said, that he realized that his job as an anesthesia technician wasn't truly fulfilling him.

In his grief, Faustin took a step back, analyzed his life, and made a decision that would see him making history as well as a

career change.

“It was one of those [epiphanies] where [I thought], ‘I’ve got stuff, I’ve got money, but I’m not really happy.’”

Now, at 43-years-old, Faustin is Oregon's first Black winemaker. He's also producing a documentary that aims to highlight the voices of other underrepresented groups in his industry.

The film, titled *Red, White and Black*,

aims to share the stories of people of color and LGBT people in the industry — which has for many years been perceived as the domain of wealthy White men.

He said the barriers he's faced have been numerous, from the learning curve to assumptions that he is the “help” rather than the owner of his 50-acre property, the site of

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